



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Wednesday, July 23, 2008**

**08-95**

**POINT HOPE MAN SENTENCED TO 2 YEARS IN FEDERAL  
PRISON FOR FIREARMS VIOLATION**

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen announced today, July 23, 2008, that Russell J. Lane, a resident of Point Hope, was sentenced in federal court in Anchorage to two years in prison for his conviction for being a felon in possession of a firearm. The Court also ordered forfeiture of the firearms and ammunition.

United States District Court Judge Timothy M. Burgess imposed the sentences on Lane, age 40.

According to information presented to the court by Assistant United States Attorney Bryan Schroder, on March 25, 2007, Lane made death threats against members of his family. The North Slope Borough Police Department sent a police officer to his home about 4:00 a.m. to check on the welfare of Lane's wife. While at the residence, the officer saw Lane in possession of a shotgun—officers later seized the shotgun. On June 27, after Lane was arrested on federal charges, police officers found another firearm and over 300 rounds of ammunition at Lane's home. Lane is prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition because he was previously convicted on an Alaska State charge of sexual assault in the second degree, a felony crime.

While recognizing Lane's position in the community as the captain of a whaling crew, Judge Burgess cited Lane's pattern of assaultive and dangerous conduct, fueled by alcohol. In sentencing Lane to imprisonment, the judge expressed his intent to protect the public and deter future illegal conduct by the defendant, as well as show other potential violators in rural Alaska that there are consequences for not obeying the law.

Mr. Cohen commended the Project Safe Neighborhoods Task Force, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the Alaska State Troopers and the North Slope Borough Police Department, for the investigation leading to the successful prosecution of Lane. Of special note was the work of Task Force Officer Gordon Bittner of the Alaska State Troopers.

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